

SECRET

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THE CHIEF OF STAFF OR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

We agreed with many of CIA's observations and in particular with the descriptions of considerations affecting the Soviet re-action to the Cuban crisis contained in the first third of the memorandum.

However, we differ with the presentation of probable Soviet policy decisions as being essentially a choice of two alternatives--a "hard" line devoted to arms buildup or a "soft" line stressing non-violent, disarmament measures, and peaceful coexistence. We believe that Moscow will not choose between these two approaches, but will -- as it did in the past -- combine arms building with pursuit of its objectives through negotiation.

While the possibility of a major change in Soviet policy over a broad range of issues cannot be excluded, recent evidence suggests that Soviet policy on major issues will not be marked by basically new departures. The Cuban crisis appears to have added weight to the arguments on both sides of unsettled questions in Soviet policy, but without shifting the pre-existing equilibrium. It may well turn out that in the long run the principal effect of the Cuban crisis will have been to make difficult decisions even more difficult and thus aid to the Soviet leadership's tendency to compromise, adopt half-measures and avoid taking radical decisions.

Because we do not view Soviet policy alternatives as a single hard-soft spectrum, we disagree with the estimate, in paragraph IV, that an assertive US policy would unquestionably compel Moscow toward a "hard" line. Obviously an assertive US policy threatening Soviet withdrawal from Eastern Europe, for example, would have that effect, and in the extreme case might even cause the Soviet leaders to conclude that they had no alternative but to launch a pre-emptive strike. However, more assertive displays of assertiveness on the part of the West could also have the opposite effect, causing the Soviets to exert greater efforts in scaling negotiations and agreements with the West. We

DO DRAFT

E.O. 11652 SEC. C, 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3

State (Nk-TQ-4)

BY MEE

NARS, DATE 5/5/77

Well now, I think it's important to point out some findings on
that in our own field. We have found that, despite
the difficulties of getting the right kind of plant material
in sometimes 30 or 40 days, we still have been able to provide
good quality.

TDR has a study on Soviet post-harvest losses in preparation.

Roger Hilman

Comments on CIA Memorandum, "Soviet Policy in the Aftermath of Cuban Crisis" (29 November, 1962)

We agree with many of CIA's observations and in particular with the description of considerations affecting the Soviet reaction to the Cuban crisis contained in the first third of the memorandum.

However, we differ with the presentation of probable Soviet policy decisions as being essentially a choice of two alternatives -- a "hard" line devoted to an arms buildup or a "soft" line stressing negotiation, disarmament measures and peaceful coexistence. We believe that Moscow will not choose between these two approaches, but will -- as it has in the past -- combine arms building with pursuit of its objectives through negotiation.

While the possibility of a major change in Soviet policy over a broad range of issues cannot be excluded, recent evidence suggests that Soviet policy on major issues will not be marked by radically new departures. The Cuban crisis appears to have added weight to the arguments on both sides of unsettled questions in Soviet policy, but without shifting the pre-existing equilibrium. It may well turn out that in the long run the principal effect of the Cuban crisis will have been to make difficult decisions even more difficult and thus add to the Soviet leadership's propensity to temporize, adopt half-measures and avoid taking radical decisions.

Because we do not view Soviet policy alternatives as a single hard-soft dichotomy, we disagree with the estimate, in paragraph 17, that an assertive US policy would unquestionably impel Khrushchev toward a "hard" line. Obviously an aggressive US policy (demanding Soviet withdrawal from Eastern Europe, for example) would have that effect, and in the extreme case might even drive the Soviet leaders to conclude that they had no alternative but to launch a pre-emptive strike. However, more moderate displays of assertiveness on the part of the West could well have the opposite effect, causing the Soviets to exert greater efforts in seeking negotiations and agreements with the West. We

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believe that the lesson of the passing of Soviet deadlines on Berlin and the withdrawal of missiles from Cuba is that, despite his sensitivity to appearing weak, Khrushchev will show prudence in response to a policy which is assertive without being provocative.

INR has a Study on Soviet post-Cuba policy in preparation

Roger Hilsman